



### Life Course

Childhood Risk Factor

### Brief Name

Single Parent Households

### Indicator

Percent of children living in single-parent households.

### Description

This metric is the percent of children living in single-parent families, including mother- or father-headed families.

WI	US	Best	Worst
32%*	34.9%	19.5%	53.3%
		UT	DC
Year			
2015			

### Numerator

Number of children living with their own parent in a household with male or female head, with no partner present

### Denominator

Child residences aged 0 to 18, in all living arrangements, including dual parent, or living alone

\*Indicates statistically significant difference from the US value at  $p < 0.05$ .

### Importance

Children living in single-parent households often have less stability, fewer rules, harsher discipline, and less supervision, all of which may impede social and emotional development. These children often live in more economically disadvantaged families, which can also negatively impact the child's development (Amato, 2005). Compared to children in two-parent families, children in single-parent households are more likely to drop out of school, have a teen pregnancy, or experience their own divorce in adulthood (Sapharas, 2016).

### Limitations

The exact mechanism for increased stress on a child in a single-parent family is not known, and a parent may be able to counteract the potential disadvantage through enhanced parenting, a supportive family or community, and additional financial resources.

This metric does not account for live-in partners or close relatives that may have frequent contact with a child.

### Source

Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, Supplementary Survey and 2002 through 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), accessed at <http://datacenter.kidscount.org/data/tables/106-children-in-single-parent-families>. Amato, Paul R. "The impact of family formation change on the cognitive, social, and emotional wellbeing of the next generation." *The Future of Children*, (2005): 75-96. Sapharas, Nicole K., et al. "Effects of Parental Divorce or a Father's Death on High School Completion." *Psychology in the Schools*, 53.8 (2016): 861-874.